

ABSTRACT

A method for flowing data, such as text data, into an arbitrary path defined by a page description language specification ("PDL specification") generally comprises the steps of: identifying a path defined in the PDL specification as a datawrapping path; associating a data block with the data-wrapping path; and generating a bitmap representation of the data block according to the path boundary and according to a predefined flow rule. Preferably, the identifying step includes the steps of associating a graphics state with the path and storing the graphics state in memory, and the generating step includes the step of applying the stored graphics state to the data block. Therefore, the generating step can be repeated for multiple data blocks to generate multiple bit map representations. The text wrapping path is preferably identified in the PDL specification by an attribute string associated with the path. Therefore, when the wrapping path is identified, the graphic states of the attribute string are saved in memory and are then subsequently applied to the data blocks when the bitmap representations of the data blocks are generated.